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AT HOME.

How to make it 'sweet home,' that is the question. Not dull, or sour, or bitter, as many homes are, but our 'ain fireside,' the place that has no place like it—this is what we all want it to be.

If one could fly over the house-tops, like the man in the story, and unroof them to peep in, or if a true census could be taken, we should find that for most people 'home, sweet home' is only an abstract idea, not a matter of experience. Leaving unhappy families out of the question, peaceful folks in general consider their home as the place where they do as they like, and get food, rest, and shelter. It never occurs to them that it is sweet. They hanker after a new one, or for some possible change. And several other places seem to be not only like it but much better than it.

We want to get 'home, sweet home' out of the abstract and into the concrete. The popular notion of it, as a vague state of life, is taken from fanciful pictures and verses. These represent home as a holiday house, where the children are making a perpetual rush upon a returning father, and where the family sit in a fireside circle with nothing to do except to share the frugal meal—it is always frugal with the poets. Mrs Hemans is a little more definite in her beautiful lines:

There woman's voice flows forth in song,
Or childhood's tale is told,
Or lips move tunefully along
Some glorious page of old.

But even this deals only with evening amusement; and it is not always evening any more than it is always May; moreover, the children have to be sent to bed, and the woman 'may sing too often and too long.'

As regards the other descriptions, sometimes there are no little ones to make welcome with the poetic scramble, sometimes there is nobody to be rushed upon—or at least that pretty scene cannot go on all day. The fireside circle is a bad suggestion when one is eating ice and trying to

get cool; life is not story and song, but is often made of tiring tasks, vexatious details. And lastly, one is not satisfied with the frugal meal, except in print. In fact, the typical description is not able to stand close scrutiny; and hence the ideal home is supposed to be a vague enviable thing, about which common mortals need not trouble themselves. A great mistake; for though the poetic description becomes weak and almost grotesque when looked at closely, it is still in a sense good and true; for it is like the artist's cartoon daubed broadly to give the general colouring; and the general colouring of home is the spirit of love and contentment, which these poor words and symbols of the poets have tried to represent.

As for contentment, in this case it cannot mean the absence of anxiety or of ambition, nor even that we possess what we hoped for; but only that what we have, we find to be sweet. As for love, it is so much a necessity in home-life, that the very word has come to apply much more to the presence of the people than to the peace shared with them. Change all possessions, and it remains unchanged; transfer the household, and it still is home; but take the circle of our affections away, and everything is gone. The word 'home' has, then, a complex meaning—the dwelling-place, the domestic property and arrangements as a whole, but most of all the united life under one roof. The English-speaking races are proud of this beautiful word; in many other languages the best word to be found instead has a narrower meaning—only 'the house' or 'the hearth.'

Now what is necessary for a happy home? Charles Lamb's suggestion was that there should be in every house a baby rising six months and a kitten rising six weeks. A very nice suggestion too, but slightly impracticable. Kittens have a knack of growing up; and we do not know the shop in fairyland where babies can be purchased *ad lib.* in bandboxes. Luckily, the necessities of the ideal home are more within reach than King Baby, who cannot be bought for gold. With a

suitable dwelling-place and prudent management, it is easy enough to solve the problem of how to make home sweet. First as to the house—it ought to be healthy, bright, and sufficiently spacious. Then as to the management—it includes the practice of rule and order and the right use of income. On the important question of income as a factor in the ideal home, we cannot put the matter in a nutshell better than our old friend Mr Micawber did. In one of his conversations, something turns up to the following effect: 'Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure nineteen nineteen six—result happiness. Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure twenty pounds ought and six—result misery. The blossom is blighted, the leaf is withered, the god of day goes down upon the dreary scene, and—and, in short, you are for ever floored!' A calamity so shocking as Mr Micawber describes must not overtake our ideal home, whatever else happens to it.

Turning next to the character of the home circle, we imagine them to be the ordinary God-fearing and law-abiding folk who form the bulk of the middle classes. The household will be sustained at its best by three simple qualities—virtues in the strict sense of the word, because exercises of strength—home virtues, common things of every day, like necessary water, salt, or bread. These three are good temper, cheerfulness, and energy. The house has been described specially with a view to their preservation. Health, brightness, and sufficient space make it easier to foster these good gifts. The opposite conditions in a house will give the opposite results; the unhealthy home, gloomy and uncomfortable, produces ill-temper, dejection, and languor. But, given the suitable dwelling-place and the sensible management, good temper, cheerfulness, and energy can more easily be cultivated. In a character they rise together, parts of one growth, like the three flowers on a lily stalk.

They are very necessary to enable us to conquer and put out of sight the small vexations of every day; still more needed are they in the critical times of anxiety, the visitations of sorrow, against which no roof can protect, no door can be barred. The knowledge of what life really is—the weariness of daily annoyances, the dread of greater griefs—makes us conscious of a vast difference between the peaceful homes of poetry and romance and the real homes of vicissitude and work. This difference is bridged over by our three household virtues. Mutual good-temper, cheerfulness, and energy are a triple strength, making the family brave in passing trials, and absolutely independent of those trifling troubles that spoil peace and take the poetry out of life.

Cultivating, then, these three splendid qualities, the home circle find in sufficient and interested occupation a healthy appetite for the times of rest and union and amusement. Idleness means discontent, and work apart means joy together. Amusement is necessary to complete home-life. Remember its evenings are to be the safeguard of the young folks from wishing to wander; its innocent gaieties are to be the brightest picture in the children's memory for ever after.

There is one thing, and that perhaps the chief thing, still to be added to our ideal home. The sweetness of it is the sweetness of the woman who

is its reigning spirit. She does more than reign, and she is more to it than a queen to a kingdom. In the 'sweet home' there is always a woman who is its centre and its soul. Everything depends on her. Every one's happiness belongs to her. If she knew her responsibility, it would frighten her; if she found out all her preciousness, it would take her breath away. But there is no trembling, no self-consciousness; she simply remains in her place, like a fair column that upholds an arch, because, though fragile, it is built so truly. The Germans have a beautiful word instead of housekeeper or housewife; they say 'house-mother.' The youngest maid or matron who takes care of the home has earned the title of the house-mother, as if she was the dear owner of everything, and everything looked up to her in return. There is no reason why her happy lot should be felt as a heavy care. What can be a greater triumph to a woman's heart than to have created 'home, sweet home?' And it is woman's privilege to create out of common things and daily life that earthly paradise.

JOHN VALE'S GUARDIAN.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE last departed Earl of Barfield had been something of an eccentric and a good deal of a miser, and the new lord was disposed on coming into his estates to strew what the old man had gathered. For years, Barfield Hall had slept with closed eyes in the care of one or two servants on board-wages. Now, its old-fashioned saloons were thrown open again; an army of workmen had invaded the place; and in the course of a four months' occupation, had so far refurbished it that it was hard to recognise. Van-load after van-load of furniture was discharged at its doors; and tons of venerable rubbish were carted away and consigned to a new oblivion. When the old Earl had been twelve months in the family vault, his successor came down with the young Countess and took possession, to the much rejoicing of the local tradespeople, as well as the smaller local magnates, who had long mourned the absence of their natural chieftain.

His young lordship, as it was the fashion to call him, was by this time well into the forties; but he was apparently determined to make the best of such time as was left to him, and went in heartily for all sorts of social entertainment. Dinners, social and political, luncheons ditto and ditto, garden-parties, carpet-dances, ceremonious balls, private theatricals, whatever he could think of for the enlivening of the country-side and the entertainment of his guests, his lordship offered.

Amongst other public posts he held was that of Lieutenant-colonel of the County Yeomanry Cavalry, and with his new scope for generosity, and his native desire to be agreeable to everybody, his lordship took upon himself to hold the annual yeomanry ball in his own house. Hitherto, the ball had been promoted by subscription, and had been held in the local Assembly Rooms, a dingy establishment, given over for the greater part of the year to the uses of a cart and coach builder, and cleared of its stock on one or two occasions only in the whole round of time between January and December.

Snelling was a yeomanry corporal, and received with the rest of the people interested a ticket for himself and a ticket for a lady. He would have offered the latter to Cecilia; but he knew that Shorthouse, as a private of twenty years' standing, would have his tickets also, and that the courtesy would be useless. Members of the troop were of course understood to appear in full parade uniform, and Snelling's clothes having been destroyed with his other belongings in the fire, he was compelled to order new ones. Cecilia was certain to be present; and since Snelling thought rather better of himself in his spurs and scarlet than in any other attire he had the right to wear, he made the life of the tailor to whom he took his instructions a burden. The clothes came to the *Barfield Arms* two days before the date fixed for the ball, and being tried on, and not turning out absolutely to his satisfaction, were taken back again with instructions that they should be altered.

This care about detail threatened for an hour or two to rob Snelling of the ball, for the amended regimentals came home only in the nick of time. Even the fashionable arrivals, who had a prescriptive right to be later than the common people, had put in their appearance when Snelling reached the Hall. He was unaccompanied, meaning to leave himself entirely free to devote his evening to Cecilia. It was not his way to look on anything as hopeless because it had once eluded him, and in point of fact if the prize he sought had fallen at once into his hands, he could never have taught himself to care for it. It was the refusal and the risk which stirred him; and they stirred him so deeply, that if he had secured Cecilia now, he would never again have grown indifferent to her.

Almost the first person he encountered was Shorthouse, with a face as red as his tunic. The good man clung heroically to the tunic and waist-belt of five years ago, and refused, in spite of the strangling testimony they afforded, to admit that he had grown in girth by a hair's-breadth. Their tight embrace made his breathing a little difficult, and he wheezed at his friend and neighbour in an unaccustomed voice.

'Bob, ode lad, I want a word with you.'

'Two, if you like,' said Snelling, who was in a better humour than common at the thought of a free hour or two in which to prosecute his courtship.

'Come into one of these here corners,' said the farmer, 'and sit down.—Now, listen to what I'm going to say. Bend down a bit; I don't want nobody to overhear.'

Snelling, resting his busby on his knees, leaned forward with his ear at Shorthouse's lips.

'Art in the same mind thou wast in six months ago?' the elder man asked him.

'As to what?' Snelling queried, turning his face towards him.

'About my gell?' Shorthouse whispered.

'I'm as much of that mind,' Snelling answered gruffly, 'as a man needs to be, if I could see my way towards it.'

'Very well,' said Shorthouse. 'I'm game to lend a helping hand. I'll have no foreign chaps sneaking after a gell o' mine. Her'll marry an Englishman, or her'll stop single.'

'You've seen that, have you?' asked the disappointed suitor.

'Seen it?—yes. I put it to 'Zaiah Winter two months gone by, and he asked me what sort of a maggot I'd got in my head to think of such a thing at all. I've found her to-day with a book I'd never seen afore. I took a look at it, and it turned out to be a Bible. It's done in French and English, and it's got a cover in bone or ivory, or summit o' that sort, with angels and tree-boughs and all sorts of things cut into it. That French chap had gi'en it to her, and her never said a word to me about it. I said nothin' neither; but I can put two and two together. I've got a father's feelin' for the wench, and somehow her bein' motherless meks me softer with her; but sparked up to by a foreigner her shall not be; I'd sooner see her in her coffin.'

'That's how anybody who knows you,' hummed Snelling in a slow deep murmur, 'would expect to hear you talk.—But what's going to be done in the matter? You can kick him out at any minute, and what he's after is plain enough; but what kicking him out will do for me, I don't see.'

'Bob,' said the elder, 'you've made a sad waste o' time i' that particular. You've niver studied the ways of the petticoats. A gell's "No" counts for nothing. Cecilia's poor mother said "No" to me three times, till at last I went up to her, and I said: "Look here," I said, "Make a hend o' this," I said. "Tek me or leave me." Her took me for better or worse that instant minute; and better it was, for her father farmed the thinnest bit o' land between here and Coldfield; and though I say it as shouldn't, there warn't a likelier chap than me within six mile. The young generation's a bit better; but they was a weedy lot about Hoyden i' my marrying days. A gell's "No" is just a sort o' "Follow me, lad," and that I found out when you was going about in corduroys and a round jacket.'

Hope began to knock at Snelling's heart again; but he contrived to keep his common aspect of massive self-possession. 'You think,' he asked, 'it's worth my while to speak again?'

'I'll mek it so,' said Shorthouse, 'if I've got any vice i' the matter. I'd sooner lay her cold in her grave than let her wed anybody but an Englishman. I wonder at the young fellow's folly. He says to me one day at 'Zaiah Winter's house, himself: "You're John Bull, you are, inside and out. A John Buller man than you be," he says, "I never see." And yet in spite o' that, it's as plain as the nose on your face as he comes a-courtin' Cecilia.—He's here to-night.'

'What?' Snelling snarled, in a voice which drew half-a-dozen pair of eyes upon him.

'Hush, hush!' the farmer warned him; 'tek it easy, lad—tek it easy. I'll see no mischief comes o' it. They was talkin' together at the other end o' the room when you and me run agen one another.—Don't go yet, Bob; wait a while. I've another word to say to you. You're not quite so young as you used to be, and you've got a bit perhaps too solemn a church-going style about you. Spark up a bit; smarten thyself, ode lad. Why, i' my courtin' days, I'd have a dozen wenchies on the giggle afore I'd been five minutes among 'em. They like a merry-

hearted man, Bob. These canst tek that for gospel.'

'What brings him here?' said Snelling, who had but little merriment to waste on anybody.

'I don't know,' the farmer answered. 'I found him a-jabberin' away with Sir Ferdinand and Sir Ferdinand's lady; and her ladyship in special piping like a jenny-wren, in his own foreign lingo, and swayin' and laughin' and smilin' at what he said as if he'd been a hemperor. They seem inclined to mek a lot of him; and I ain't one of them as sets himself up against his betters. The young man's all right, I mek no doubt; but "hands off" is my word to him.—Now, Bob, brisk up a bit, get away; you've got my good-will.'

Snelling rose slowly, with a single nod in answer. He looked quite soldierly in his handsome uniform, and was as well set up by nature as most men can be by the exercises of the drill-yard. As he approached the upper end of the ballroom he saw Jousserau in the act of presenting Cecilia to Lady Blacquaire, who took the girl's hand kindly and with no air of patronage. Cecilia bore herself perfectly; but it was evident for all that that she was a trifle scared by immediate contact with so much greatness.

'That's where it is,' said Snelling to himself. 'The silly little thing's got it into her head that because he's friends of a sort with that kind of folks, she will get amongst them too. Her head's a bit turned with the notion, and that's where he gets the advantage over me. She'd never have thought about him if he hadn't come to church in my lord's carriage.'

He dared not intrude himself while Cecilia was with her ladyship; but when once they had parted, he strolled towards her, and made a stiff half-ironic inclination to her in imitation of the manner of his officers and other people of quality. 'This is better than the Assembly Rooms last year,' he said, by way of opening a conversation.

'Very much better,' Cecilia answered. 'It is very kind of his lordship to have the ball held here; but we can't expect him to do it always, and it will spoil us for next year.'

At this instant the county member, in passing, shook hands with Snelling, whose vote and influence were worth conserving, and tapped Jousserau on the shoulder. 'Excuse me, Mr Snelling,' he said; and then to Jousserau in his own language: 'I want to introduce to you a friend of mine, a great admirer of your last picture, by the way. He is an excellent fellow, but—'

All Sir Ferdinand's acquaintances were excellent fellows, and they all had a 'but' to their excellences.

'Shall I find you a seat, Miss Shorthouse?' Snelling asked, when he and Cecilia were thus left to themselves. 'You'll be getting tired if you stand between the dances.'

Cecilia took his proffered arm. He conducted her to a seat and sat down beside her. He wanted to follow Shorthouse's advice and to make himself brighter and livelier; but he could think of nothing to start upon. His rival was in his thoughts, and his unexpected appearance at the ball was irritating. 'I hadn't expected to find our French friend here,' he said. 'What brings

him at a yeomanry ball, I should like to know?'

'I suppose,' returned Cecilia laughingly, 'that none of us would be here if we had not been asked. Mr Jousserau has been telling me that he means to paint pictures of English life. He thinks that a yeomanry ball would make a very brilliant scene for a picture, and I fancy that he is here chiefly to make observations.'

'Well,' returned Snelling, 'that's what I should call as rare a bit of impudence as I ever heard of.'

'Impudence!' said Cecilia, in a tone of astonishment. 'What can you mean, Mr Snelling?'

'I'm a part of this assembly,' he responded, 'and I've an objection to being stared at and took stock of by anybody as wants to make money out o' me without my free gift and permission.'

'Really, Mr Snelling,' said the girl, 'I think you are a little too sensitive.'

'Perhaps so, perhaps not,' he answered. 'Anyway, that's my feeling.'

Cecilia said nothing; and a moment later Shorthouse appeared and took a seat beside his chosen son-in-law. He nudged Snelling with his elbow, and gave him a wink and a nod towards Cecilia, as an intimation to begin to make himself agreeable. Snelling not putting these instructions into immediate practice, the farmer began an elaborate pantomime, clumsily expressive of an invitation to dance. Snelling, fearing lest his companion's motions should be observed by the girl, put an end to them by a nudge of the elbow and a warning frown. He was in the very act of turning to obey the dumb injunction, when the band struck up the first bars of a polka, and there was Jousserau standing before Cecilia. The girl rose, and the two sailed away together in time to the music. Snelling, in blank astonishment, turned on Shorthouse, and he and the farmer stared at each other in a mutual indignation.

'Is that company manners?' Snelling demanded. 'A young lady is sittin' talking with one man, and another comes and whirls her off from under his very nose!'

'I suppose the man had axed her beforehand,' said Shorthouse. 'Why didn't you ax her yourself, when I told you?'

'I was turning round,' Snelling responded angrily, 'when he walked her away from under my very nose. I shall give that young man a piece of my mind.'

'Thee 'lt help nothing by meking a row here, Bob, my lad,' returned the senior.

'It's not my way to mek rows anywhere,' Snelling answered; 'but I shall give that young man a piece o' my mind, and a good-sized piece into the bargain.' He got up and strode away to the buffet; and there, not caring that his angry face should betray him, he forced an aspect of hilarity, and clapped one or two of his comrades boisterously on the shoulder. Lord Barfield did things liberally, and there was an ample, and even more than ample, supply of champagne. Snelling thought but lightly of that beverage, and altogether underrated its effect. He knew, indeed, very little about it, and had tasted it perhaps half-a-dozen times in his life; but if any man had told him that he could possibly take too much of it for sobriety, he would have laughed the idea to scorn. He was hot and excited, and

one servant or another filling his glass as often as he set it down, he drank more than he knew, and in a surprisingly short space of time the wine was buzzing in his head, and there was an altogether unaccustomed flush upon his face. His deep voice was always louder and more powerful than he fancied, and now it rang out so noisily once or twice that one or two of his comrades warned him.

'I say, corporal, don't make that row; we shall have his lordship here.'

It never entered the man's head that he had been drinking, or that the wild flush of gaiety with sudden flashes of ill-temper was attributable to the wine. Champagne was a beverage for women, and a solid man like himself could surely drink a dozen of it and feel nothing.

Shorthouse was at his elbow, and took him by the wrist as he laid his hand upon a bottle. 'Come back into the ballroom, Bob, and leave that alone.'

'Leave it alone?' Snelling answered. 'What for? Why should I leave it alone?'

'Well, if you want to know,' Shorthouse responded bluffly, 'you've had enough on it. It's beginning to tell on you.'

'What, that stuff?' cried Snelling with a great roaring laugh. 'That's a good un, and no mistake.' He bent in his vinous mirth, clipping his thighs with both hands, laughing obstreperously. 'Why, I could tek a hog'shead of it and never come to harm.'

'You be said, Bob, and come along,' the farmer insisted. 'You've had enough on it.'

But Snelling looked down from his own superior height over Shorthouse's shoulder, and his glance was so intent and wrathful that the farmer turned round to see at what it was directed. Jousserau was standing there, talking to Sir Ferdinand, and in the act of clinking glasses with him. Snelling shouldered his companion out of the way and laid a ponderous hand on the artist's arm. 'I'll thank you,' he said, 'to let me take the liberty of a word with you.'

'Assuredly,' the artist answered, looking up at him.

'What you are,' said Snelling, 'and who you are, I neither know nor care. Parson Heathcote, I'm told, gives you out for a gentleman; but that you're not, and I'd lay my life upon it.'

Jousserau saw his condition at a glance, and he had heard some hint of his proposal to Cecilia. 'Do not let us talk of that,' he said. 'You shall have what opinion you please.—I am engaged.' He turned once more towards Sir Ferdinand, who was staring wrathfully at Snelling.

'Oh, but we will talk about it; I am going to talk about it.'

'I must really beg your pardon, Mr Snelling,' said the county member. 'You may state your opinion elsewhere, but you shall not state it here. Please, understand that.'

'I know you, Sir Ferdinand,' said Snelling, brandishing his arm, 'and I knew your father and your grandfather afore you. I know who you are; but who this chap is I don't know.'

'Captain Hawkes,' said Sir Ferdinand with great smoothness, addressing one of the astonished bystanders, 'I suppose that this person being in military uniform, and you being in uniform also, that he is amenable to your orders. I am not a

military man myself; but I should presume that to be the case. Will you kindly have him taken away somewhere? He is intoxicated, and as you observe, is creating a disturbance.'

'Intoxicated!' shouted Snelling. 'Me? If there's e'er another man here dares to say so, I'll knock him down.'

The gentleman appealed to by Sir Ferdinand made a mere motion of the hand to one or two of the yeomanry troopers, and in an instant half-a-dozen stalwart fellows were about him.

'Come along, Snelling,' said one of them with persuasive good-humour. 'Don't let's have any trouble about it.'

Snelling had not exceeded so far that he had lost all sense of personal dignity. 'I'll have no scuffle,' he said, with unexpected calm. 'I'll take Sir Ferdinand's word for it that I'm not wanted. As for that little jackanapes yonder, I can state my opinion of him at some future time, maybe.' So saying, he saluted his captain and walked from the room steady and erect.

'That's a very unusual condition for Mr Snelling, surely,' said Sir Ferdinand, addressing Shorthouse.

'It's a condition I never see him in afore,' Shorthouse answered. 'The truth is, Sir Ferdinand, the poor fellow's done no fault, but been overtaken in a misfortune. He looked on this here champagne wine like so much ginger pop, and it never entered into his mind to think as it could hurt him. There isn't a more respectable man, Sir Ferdinand, not for twenty mile around.'

An assenting murmur ran about the room.

'Evidently an accident,' said the county member.—'But, Jousserau,' he added in French to his companion, 'what had you done to make the man so angry?'

'My faith!' said Jousserau, 'nothing that I know of, absolutely nothing!'

Snelling meanwhile was raging across the park, with occasional fierce pauses. 'I'm not fit company,' he said over and over again, 'for a place where that foreign monkey can show himself and be made much of. I've had enough of this. I'll change it. I've been soft and quiet long enough. I'll change it all; I'll find a means to be revenged on that fellow.' He shook his fist madly at the lighted Hall, and turning again, plunged on through the darkness with the actual lust of murder in his heart.

THE REVOLUTION IN TEA.

It is a remarkable fact that the importations of Indian and Ceylon teas into this country are now almost equal in weight to, and are actually greater in money-value than, the importations of China teas. And yet the cultivation of tea in India is an industry scarcely fifty years old, and in Ceylon barely ten years old. Between 1866 and 1886 the exports of China tea doubled; but in the same period the exports of Indian teas increased *fourteen-fold*. The consequences, actual and impending, of this revolution in the trade are causing such serious concern in China, where tea is a staple industry, as well as a leading source of imperial revenue (every pound exported paying to the Treasury a duty equal to about twopence

per pound), that a special investigation into the whole subject was lately ordered by the Tsungli Yamen. Sir Robert Hart, who has charge of the imperial maritime customs of China, has embodied the results of the inquiry in a Report which affords a great deal of interesting information.

It is shown that the decline of Chinese tea in favour is chiefly in Great Britain and America—which latter country, however, takes Japan tea now in preference to both Chinese and Indian—for Russia, the next largest consumer, is increasing its demands, although not sufficiently to make up for the loss of the British markets. And it is also stated that the decline in favour of China teas is not due to any deterioration in the quality of the native leaf, but chiefly to the carelessness with which it is prepared for market. The growing favour of Indian teas, on the other hand, is said not to be due to superior flavour, but to superior strength and greater care in preparation, so that a pound of it goes much further than a pound of the Chinese teas.

It is worth while comparing the systems on which the industry is conducted in the two competing countries, so as to understand how the great revolution in the trade has been accomplished.

In China, tea is grown for the most part in small gardens farmed by those who own them, generally men of little or no capital with which to obtain fertilisers and to renew the plants from time to time. The 'picking' is done by the family of the grower; but in the height of the season extra hands have to be employed. To economise this expense, the picking is pushed forward, and the plucked leaves are allowed to stand until the picking is finished, whereby they suffer greatly in quality. A consequence of this manner of proceeding is that the leaves are not evenly 'withered' when the process of manufacture begins.

In India, on the other hand, the tea is grown in large gardens, sometimes covering thousands of acres, superintended either by the owner himself or by a skilled agent. In the Assam district the gardens are in the alluvial valleys of the large rivers, and many of them are formed of ground reclaimed from the primeval jungle with all the richness of a virgin soil. The plants are grown from selected seeds, and the indigenous plant has been found superior to the China plant which was at first favoured. The labour is all done by coolies, brought from the central provinces at a considerable expense, and the wages are high—for India. But with efficient, although costly, labour the greatest care is practised in cultivation, digging, weeding, &c., and especially in the delicate work of plucking. The exact moment to begin picking is determined by the overseer, and the leaves have to be removed in such a way as to cause no injury to the plant. If a leaf be carefully plucked, another will follow in about a fortnight; but if carelessness be used, the branch may be rendered barren for the rest

of the season. Close and constant supervision by European managers and assistants is thus necessary, and by this means the Indian planters get some sixteen successive pickings in one season; while the Chinese get only four. Moreover, in the Indian gardens, when the leaves are plucked, they are at once started on the course of 'making,' and are not left to lie about, as in China; so there is no deterioration.

Each picking of a garden is in India called a 'break,' and in China a 'chop.' But an Indian 'break' is rarely above a hundred chests, and is often only twenty, and it is absolutely even in quality throughout; whereas a Chinese 'chop' may be run up to several hundred chests or half-chests, purporting to be of even quality, but made up of many pickings from different gardens, producing a mixture which is not uniform, at the expense of the deterioration of the better leaves.

In India, each day's picking is immediately 'withered,' and when perfectly and evenly withered, is 'rolled' lightly by a machine. In China, the withered or partially withered leaves are put into small cotton bags, loosely tied, and placed in open wooden boxes, the sides of which are pierced with numerous holes. A man then gets into the box and presses and kneads the bags with his feet, with the object of both rolling the leaves and expressing the moisture.

Next comes 'fermentation.' In India, this is done in the open air, without any extraneous aid; and it is part of the skill of the planter to know the exact moment when to arrest the process, for immediately the proper point is reached, the tea must be 'fired.' In China, after the jumping process above described, the tea is placed in baskets and covered up with cotton or felt mats, so as to retain the heat and hasten the fermentation. After it has stood thus covered up for a certain time, it is taken out and 'fired.' This firing is one of the most important of all the processes, and requires great skill and care. The Indian planter is most particular to see that only the very best hardwood charcoal is used, and that the tea is so constantly turned over that there is no chance of any of it getting burned. A single basket of burnt leaf will spoil a whole 'break.' In China they often make the tea 'smoky' by using ill-made charcoal, and sometimes 'tarry' by firing with soft woods like fir and pine. The 'tarry' flavour, it is said, will often not develop until long after the tea has left China, and some waters bring it out more disagreeably than others.

The following is or should be the process of 'firing' by the charcoal system. After the fire is ready, a tubular basket, narrow at the middle and wide at both ends, is placed over it, and into this tube a sieve is dropped, covered with tea-leaves, shaken on it to about an inch in thickness. The leaves have to be carefully watched while the sieve is over the fire; and after about five or six minutes, they are removed and rolled. As the balls of leaves come out of the hands of the roller, they are placed in a heap on the floor; and when all have been thus manipulated, they are shaken on to the sieves again and set over the fire for a few minutes longer. They may even sometimes be rolled and fired a third time until the leaves have assumed the right dark colour. When the whole batch has been thus treated, it is placed thickly in the baskets and again put over the fire.

The attendant makes a hole with his hand through the centre of the mass, so as to allow vent to the heat as well as to any smoke or vapour from the charcoal, and he then covers it over with a flat basket. The heat of the fire is now reduced, and the tea is allowed to remain over it until perfectly dry. It has to be constantly watched and frequently stirred to ensure equal heating. When the firing is done, the black colour of black tea should be well established, although it afterwards improves in appearance. The tea is then winnowed and sifted through various sieves to divide it into the different kinds.

In India, however, another process for firing tea has been introduced of late years. It is called a 'Sirocco,' and is a machine for applying hot air, which is superseding the charcoal process. It is rapid in its work, and is said to be superior in many ways. The leaf is laid out on wire-gauze trays, which are passed through the hot-air machine at a temperature of three hundred degrees, and in from fifteen to twenty minutes the tea is thoroughly fired. It is then placed in the 'sifters,' which are worked by machinery with either a lateral or rotatory motion, and the different grades are sifted out, such as Dust, Broken Pekoe, and Pekoe. The larger and coarser leaves which do not pass through the sieves are cut to an even size and classed as Pekoe Souchong.

The Hankow Commissioner of Customs declares that the method practised in China of rolling and squeezing the leaves before fermentation goes a long way to account for the large quantities of inferior teas which are sent into the market—of good leaf spoiled.

The weakest part of the Chinese system, however, seems to be in getting it to market. In India, everything is done in the garden, from the picking to the packing ready for shipment in properly branded 'breaks.' But in China, the grower does not prepare the tea for market; he brings it up to a certain stage, and an intermediary 'tea-man' has to complete the work at his convenience. Thus the tea is often long exposed to the influence of the weather before it gets into the lead-lined chests. The 'tea-man' lives mostly in Hankow, Shanghai, or Canton; and about March or April he starts up-country well supplied with copper 'cash.' At some suitable point for shipment he has a central 'hong' or factory, and 'godown' or warehouse. Thence he despatches his agents in all directions; and they scatter sub-agents all through the tea-districts to collect the leaf from the growers. It is gradually brought in to the 'hong' in bags, and may be for days on the road, exposed to the weather thus imperfectly covered. When enough is collected at the 'hong,' the tea-man proceeds to pick and refine it. By means of a revolving sieve, the larger leaves and the smaller are separated; then come mixing and blending, so as to produce an average appearance for different 'chops'; and then it is packed for market.

One of the complaints is, that this packing is very carelessly and roughly done in China, to the further injury of the delicate leaf. The coolies are said to tread it into the boxes with their feet—not always bare—with a total lack of discrimination, and with such amount of pressure as to produce a large proportion of Dust. The Commissioner at Wuhu reports: 'Instead of the

tea being packed carefully, it is rammed down hard, and is put into the chests while still hot. Hastily packed and heavily pressed down, the tea cannot possibly escape injury; and being put in and covered over while hot, it becomes damp when it gets cold. While hot, the tea is very brittle, and gets broken very easily, yielding in consequence a large percentage of Dust. The object of packing the tea while hot is to enable it to retain its aroma, so that when the chests are opened there may be a fragrant odour emitted. The aroma is there, no doubt, but at the expense of the tea, which suffers in consequence. The tea after being fired and packed is conveyed part of the way in wheelbarrows and part of the way by boat. It is handled roughly *en route*, and being protected by a few mats only—and these hastily thrown together—it gets wet. No notice, perhaps, is taken of this circumstance, and hence the tea gets ruined.'

Shanghai merchants complain of the quality of the teas manufactured in Ningpo district under the name of Pingsueys. Some of the dealers, they say, do honourably make and supply pure tea; but the majority mix 'spurious rubbish' with the good leaf, and colour it to look like the genuine article. One of the least harmful forms of adulteration is tea-powder mixed with congee and rolled into pillules, to sell as 'Gunpowder'; but in many cases all sorts of foreign and even injurious substances are introduced.

In Foochow, we find the European merchants complaining of the frauds of 'tea-men' selling a 'chop' of inferior stuff by a false sample of good quality. But a more serious matter, as more difficult of detection, is the large admixture of what is well called 'Lie Tea'—that is to say, leaves other than tea-leaves—and the employment of Congee or rice-water, tea-dust, soot, and other deleterious substances, in the manufacture of locally packed teas. Even the expert is often unable to discover the presence of 'Lie Tea' in the finer grades, so cleverly is the fraud manipulated.

To come back to India: we find a very different system in vogue. The moment the tea is ready, it is packed—loosely, and never pressed, but shaken down—in strong air-tight boxes and shut up at once from atmospheric influences. No leaves are broken in the packing, and no Dust is made in the chest; indeed, many planters pass the tea carefully through a sieve before packing, so as to remove whatever Dust may have formed in the previous processes. Every chest is honestly and faithfully what it professes to be, and every box in a 'break' is precisely the same as the rest of the 'break.'

Here, then, we have the secret of the decline in favour of China teas, and the rapid ascent of Indian teas, in our markets, where sterling quality is so quickly appreciated. In India, a single garden will contain thousands of shrubs, the products of which are picked, withered, rolled, fired, packed, and despatched in one spot and under one watchful, experienced, and faithful supervision. Unremitting attention is given to every stage of the process, and the tea comes into the London market as it left the gardens in the valleys of Assam and on the hills of Cachar or Neilgherry. One profit suffices for grower, manufacturer, and shipper, and thus expenses are minimised, and genuine first-class tea is placed before

the British consumer at a low cost. In China, everything is the reverse, and although labour is cheaper there, there are so many profits to intermediaries, so much handling and such taxation, that the ultimate cost is something like threepence per pound more than the Indian rival, which goes a great deal further.

These facts are instructive, as illustrating how a great nation may lose a great industry by carelessness and dishonesty, and how a few energetic and honest traders may build up in a short time an enormous traffic. It is natural and proper that our sympathies should be with the triumph of our Indian industry.

MRS LAMSHED'S WILL

CHAPTER II.

WHEN Kate came down-stairs she found Mr Dottleson in a frame of mind very different from that in which he had spent the earlier part of the afternoon; the storm had subsided in cloudy gloom. Papa had evidently something on his mind, and she busied herself to rouse him.

'Shall we go out after tea, papa?' she began. 'Grandmamma's asleep and the rain has stopped.'

'I'm afraid I have annoyed your grandmother,' Kate, replied Mr Dottleson sorrowfully; 'but really I felt bound to speak to her as I did for your sake.'

'She was rather hurt at what you said; but you can easily make that all right.'

'How?'

'Oh, you might ask Dr Lakeworth to dinner, and make a good deal of him before granny; she would soon forget anything you said to-day.'

'I'll think about it,' said her father, who had decided to act upon his daughter's proposition the moment it was made. 'Your idea is a very good one. It wouldn't do to offend your grandmother; eh, Kate?'

'Dr Lakeworth is a weakness of hers, you know, papa. It's a regular case of love me love my dog.'

'Then next time the dog comes to see her, we'll ask him to stay to dinner with us,' he replied more good-humouredly.

'He is to call on Tuesday afternoon,' said Kate, who saw the chance of doing a little stroke of business on her own account.

'Very well. I'll be here, and invite him myself.'

When Mr Dottleson announced his intention of asking personally for the pleasure of any one's company at dinner, it signified that he intended special honour to the favoured guest; it went against the grain to confer such distinction upon Dr Lakeworth, but circumstances made it advisable.

He came home from the City half an hour earlier than usual on Tuesday, that he might make sure of meeting the doctor, and actually took upon himself to instruct the butler about the wine, a thing he had never been known to do since the memorable occasion upon which the ex-private secretary of an ex-viceroy of India came to dine with him.

The entertainment was a success from every one's point of view. Mr Dottleson was in high

spirits that day; and as Dr Lakeworth was fully alive to the importance of ingratiating himself with his host, he applied himself to the task with great assiduity. He listened to him with such deference, and received his loudly expressed opinions with such respectful attention, that Mr Dottleson's overweening vanity was gratified, and he reproached himself for the injustice he had done the man. 'He seems a very gentlemanly, well-mannered young fellow,' he mused as they went up-stairs. 'Perhaps, I have really been mistaken in him. Anyhow, I will put matters right with Mrs Lamshed at once. I will give Dr Lakeworth my photograph.'

The fortunate being to whom our friend presented his photograph was expected by the original to bear himself thenceforth as became one who had been distinguished above his fellow-men by an exceptional mark of Mr Dottleson's approbation.

'I had a new photo. taken a week or two ago, doctor,' he said blandly, interrupting the guest's conversation with his daughter. 'If you will come over here, I will show it to you.'

'If papa gives you one, speak to him to-night,' whispered Kate hurriedly, seizing the opportunity with the promptness of true generalship.

Charles Lakeworth gave a nod of intelligence, and followed his host to the end of the room, where he was detained for fifteen minutes criticising Mr Dottleson's uninteresting person as delineated in nine different attitudes more or less constrained.

'I shall be very happy if you care to select one,' he said patronisingly to the victim when the ordeal was over.

Dr Lakeworth's gratitude was sincere, in view of the opening which the presentation indicated as before him. He took pains to select the most flattering portrait, and finally won Mr Dottleson's heart by begging him to inscribe his autograph upon it. His request was so graciously complied with, that almost before the ink had had time to dry he had disclosed his halting tale of love. It was listened to gravely, but not unkindly. Mr Dottleson's blindness was being lifted from him; this young doctor was in love with his daughter, and frankly admitted that he regarded Mrs Lamshed's calls for his services only as a means of his communication with Kate. Mr Dottleson could hardly believe it; but he recalled his mother-in-law's remark, and felt suddenly reassured regarding the object of the young doctor's attention to her. No doubt he might have some other end in view; but it seemed clear that Kate was the primary attraction. So relieved was he at the discovery, that for the moment he lost sight of the fact that the suitor was a struggling professional man, who had in all probability never owned a bank account, and he did not give the point-blank refusal he would have done at any other time. He hesitated, and took refuge in a promise to consider the matter. Kate was young, and he believed Dr Lakeworth was also young. He could give no definite answer now; he must think it over; meantime, he should be glad to see him whenever he cared to look in, though he must not regard the invitation as in anyway foreshadowing consent.

It was not much for the most sanguine lover to build upon; but Charles Lakeworth, who had

never dared hope for anything but a positive refusal, was more than content with the answer.

Alas, poor human nature! A slight lapse of memory hopelessly wrecked all the good work of the evening. Charles was so completely absorbed in Kate Dottleson's society that he quite forgot everything else; and when he bade the family good-night, on the best of terms with everybody and his host in particular, he left that gentleman's photograph behind on the sofa, where he had spent the greater part of the time after dinner. There it lay unnoticed until Mr Dottleson, casting a look round the room before he turned out the gas for the night, discovered the neglected honour sticking ignominiously between the cushions. He raised his eyebrows in veritable astonishment as he picked it up. That such a gift from himself should be forgotten thus was almost incomprehensible; but surprise soon gave place to indignation, which he strove unsuccessfully to smother.

'He didn't want it,' he said to himself, throwing the picture into a dish; 'but he might at least have had the grace to take it away with him, after asking me to write my name upon it. I shall be very careful to whom I give my photograph again; that's all.'

Mr Dottleson was not the man to forget the slight he had received at Charles Lakeworth's hands; and the incident narrated above was no small factor in helping him to come to the decision he did when, next morning, he remembered the young man's avowal of love for Kate. He would not admit even to himself that such a thing weighed a single grain in his disfavour; but it is doubtful whether he would have dismissed the subject from his thoughts with a contemptuous 'impossible,' had his guest held the ground he had gained by treasuring that photograph as it deserved. The good impression his would-be son-in-law had made upon him had been more than obliterated by the unlucky forgetfulness which had wounded Mr Dottleson on his tenderest point—his vanity. He recollected with annoyance that he had given this presumptuous suitor permission to come to the house when he pleased, and had thus placed himself in a somewhat delicate position. Had it been any one else, he would have had no hesitation in informing him at once that he had considered his proposal and found it impossible to give his sanction, and, if necessary, directed him to cease visiting at his house. But, in his own interests, he could not deal so summarily with Dr Lakeworth. Mrs Lamshed's feelings, or, to be strictly accurate, Mrs Lamshed's money, had to be taken into account. To close the door in the face of 'her doctor,' as she called him, might put an end to his intercourse with Kate; but the step would certainly bring about the fulfilment of that half-made dream of a 'codicil,' and that was a contingency which must never be permitted to arise. It was no consolation to Mr Dottleson to discover that his action in asking his *bête noire* to dinner had effected its object in conciliating his mother-in-law, particularly when he found that she regarded it as a formal installation of her favourite as a prospective kinsman. She now looked upon Dr Lakeworth's engagement to Kate as a settled thing, which the course of time would bring to a satisfactory conclusion; and so warmly did

she express her approval of the match, that Mr Dottleson felt reluctantly compelled to be silent as to the views he held on the subject. If he declared his intention of opposing the young people's wishes, his mother-in-law would join issue with them against him; and although she held very decided opinions on the duty of a child to a parent, the fact was by no means a sufficient guarantee to satisfy Mr Dottleson that she would not substitute Kate's name for his own in her will, and thus render her independent of him. That would undoubtedly be preferable to the realisation of his previous fears; but it was an alternative he did not relish. He would treat his only daughter liberally if she married with his approval; but he was more ambitious for her than she was for herself, and there was little chance of their agreeing as to Charles Lakeworth's qualifications.

Mr Dottleson considered the case in all its bearings, and made up his mind that for the present his safest policy would be one of complete neutrality, while he watched for a suitable opportunity to join in the game himself. He had been a little at a loss to know how he had best receive the application Dr Lakeworth was sure to make for the pictorial 'mark of esteem' which he had treated so negligently, and was almost relieved when a week passed and he heard nothing about it. The young man had called the day after he dined at Blakewood Square to recover possession of the photograph; but learnt with some dismay that no one had seen it. He was a modest unassuming individual himself, and whilst quite aware that his neglect could hardly be gratifying to Mr Dottleson, he did not anticipate that it would give such grave offence as Kate appeared to think was inevitable.

'Papa will never forgive you for that,' she said. 'But perhaps he doesn't know you left it here. He would have been sure to mention it had he found it, and he hasn't said a word to me.'

Consultation with Mrs Lamshed determined them to let the matter drop; and Mr Dottleson was thus allowed to suppose that his guest had utterly forgotten the distinction he had received. It was a trifle in itself, but it gave Kate's father the feeling that his authority was being left on one side and himself ignored. It was dangerous for any one who desired Mr Dottleson's friendship to tamper with his self-love.

It was not long before he saw a chance of making the first move towards ousting Dr Lakeworth, and he did not fail to take advantage of it. Almost for the first time in her life, Mrs Lamshed was attacked by a violent cold, which settled upon her chest and defied all efforts to dislodge it. Charles Lakeworth came in every day, and no doubt did his best for her, but, as doctors frequently find, he had to contend with the patient as well as the malady.

'I never have been ill,' said the obstinate old lady irrationally, 'and I'm not going to begin at my time of life.—No; I *won't* go to bed, Lakeworth. This drawing-room is warmer than my room, and I'm going to stay here.'

So Mrs Lamshed remained in the drawing-room shivering and coughing, whilst Kate and her maid added their entreaties to those of the doctor; but they made no impression upon her; and at last Mr Dottleson was appealed to, to use his influence.

When he understood the condition of affairs, he looked grave, and going down-stairs, shut himself up in the library, where he worked out his project before the mirror to his own satisfaction. 'Now, it's your obvious duty,' said he to himself, 'to put Mrs Lamshed's case in the hands of some one you can trust. You can't honestly say you trust young Lakeworth, for she won't obey him; so you must summon a medical man in whom you have perfect reliance. Now, Dottleson, it won't do to send round the corner for Penkiss or Musper; you must study the old lady's peculiarities and trade upon them. If she's got a weakness it's the Peerage; and if you mean to undermine young Lakeworth's position, you must shut your eyes to the expense' (Mr Dottleson gulped down his feelings at this point), 'and get some swell physician. Sir Alfred Blodget is your man; he has his finger on the pulses of half the nobility; and if he will come here and talk to her about his illustrious patients and compare her case with theirs, she will take kindly to him. And once I get young Lakeworth away from her bedside, I'll make short work of his philandering with Kate.'

Thus Mr Dottleson reasoned and resolved. It was a costly experiment; but the danger of letting Mrs Lamshed think he wanted to get rid of Dr Lakeworth must be avoided, if possible. She could not but be flattered by a visit from such a man as Sir Alfred Blodget, and her son-in-law was right in believing that her weakness for the Peerage would predispose her to receive him favourably.

'The bill will be something awful,' sighed Mr Dottleson as he closed his letter to the great man; 'but I look upon it as a premium of insurance for the preservation of her will—I mean her life,' he hastily amended.

Mrs Lamshed frowned darkly when he told her what he had done; and it required all his powers of diplomacy to avert a storm. 'I don't want to see another doctor, Montague,' she said pettishly. 'I've told you times without number that Lakeworth is good enough for me.'

'My dear madam, I don't mean to asperse Dr Lakeworth's professional abilities; in proof of this, I have not sent for an ordinary practitioner.'

'Who is it, then?'

'My anxiety has been so great during the past few days, that I am going to ask you to allow Sir Alfred Blodget to see you when he calls; just to relieve my mind.'

Mrs Lamshed's wrinkled countenance grew calmer at the name of the new doctor, and the sagacious Dottleson followed up his advantage at once.

'He will be in to-morrow. I have no doubt that he will take your case on his way from Marlborough House, where I understand he is now in daily attendance.'

The vision conjured up by this adroit remark had an immediate effect upon Mrs Lamshed. She soared lightly to the social altitude of Sir Alfred's august *clientèle*, and expressed a hope that there was nothing infectious at Marlborough House.

'Nothing at all—nothing at all,' responded Mr Dottleson easily. 'The—ah, the Princess has been confined to her room with a severe cough or something: I observed it in the *Post* this morning.'

Mrs Lamshed lay back upon the sofa cushions, and the ghost of a smile flitted across her face. There was something very soothing in the thought that the same doctor was to prescribe for the same malady both for the Princess and herself. A little fellow-feeling with Royalty made the old lady wondrous kind, and Mr Dottleson saw that his point was gained. He did not make any attempt to further his plans just now.

'Slowly and surely, Montague, my boy,' he said pleasantly to himself as he went down-stairs. 'You've got in the thin end of the wedge, and you must drive it home gently, now you have made such a capital beginning.'

Perhaps, if Mr Dottleson could have heard what passed between his mother-in-law and daughter, five minutes after he had left them, he would not have looked quite so complacently on his beginning.

'It's really very kind and thoughtful of your father, Kate,' said Mrs Lamshed. 'Such a splendid opportunity as it will be for Charley!'

'Yes, granny. Why, if it becomes known that he has been in consultation with one of the Court physicians, his fortune will be made; he will be sent for by everybody after that.' Kate was rather sanguine, but then she was in love, and that quite accounted for it.

It is hardly necessary to say that Mr Dottleson had not been influenced by any desire to give Dr Lakeworth such an auspicious opening; the view his mother-in-law took with Kate had never presented itself to him, or the thirty-guinea visit he had requested Sir Alfred Blodget to pay would have seemed an extravagance worse than unnecessary. In fact, it was dawning upon him that he had hooked a fish which might prove unmanageable and be more costly than he calculated on. Suppose Mrs Lamshed made the inconvenient discovery that this new attendant understood her constitution, and encouraged regular visits at the rate of, say, ten guineas for each! She would pay for all subsequent attention, as a matter of course; but the expense would indirectly fall upon him. However, it was no use being frightened by shadows, and he consoled himself with the thought that he had taken the first step towards ridding the house of Charles Lakeworth, happily oblivious of the schemes which the ladies were planning up-stairs.

Sir Alfred Blodget, who had once been aptly described by an incipient page to his mistress as 'a short thick pusson with a square head,' came to see Mrs Lamshed the next day, and commenced his reign by sending his patient to bed, with injunctions to remain there until he called at noon the day afterwards. The old lady submitted meekly; and her first act, when the doctor's directions had been complied with, was to dictate a letter to Charles Lakeworth enjoining him to be present to-morrow that he might meet the great man 'in consultation.' Unfortunately, the servant who was entrusted with the note met Mr Dottleson just outside the hall door, and had to disclose to him the nature of her errand.

'Were you told to take this by hand, instead of posting it in the ordinary way?' he asked as he took the letter and glanced at the address.

'Yes, sir. Mrs Lamshed particularly said I was to take it myself,' replied the maid.

'Mrs Lamshed said so?'

'Yes, sir. Miss Dottleeson wrote it for her.'
'You may tell your mistress that I undertook to leave the note at Dr Lakeworth's.'
The woman surrendered the letter, and returned to the house.

THE TYLT-YARD GUARD.

As may be inferred from its title, the Tylt-yard Guard is one of the longest-established military guards now existing in the metropolis. In addition to the duty of protecting the buildings known as the Horse Guards, the party, by virtue of its designation, acts as a memento of the Tylt-yard which occupied a portion of the site of these buildings in the reign of Henry VIII. That yard was, of course, in near proximity to the palace of Whitehall; and there is still a court, surrounded by various military offices, called the Tylt-yard, as may be ascertained by a glance—when the sentinel's back is turned—at the inscription in a sentry-box standing there. This court is situated between the guardroom and Whitehall, and perhaps includes part of the surface of the ancient Tylt-yard.

The Tylt-yard Guard 'falls in' along with the other 'duties' about ten o'clock in the forenoon of 'guard-day.' At the time of the alignment of the various guards, passers-by in adjacent streets may hear the sergeant-major, with an extraordinary expenditure of lung-power, 'dressing' the duties, and employing a formula which has been used from time immemorial, and is much as follows: 'Steady the Queen's; Back Buckingham Palace; Forward the Tylt; Up Kensington!' When the large body of men has been accurately dressed and otherwise got into proper order, the colours are brought up by a colour-sergeant, escorted by two private soldiers, the gravity of whose demeanour clearly shows how important they consider this service. At a given signal the non-commissioned officer places the flag in the hands of a young officer in the centre of the line, arms are 'presented,' and the drums beat the 'salute,' while any men standing about in distant parts of the parade-ground instantly come to 'attention' and take off their forage caps. The captain of the guard then utters the words of command which put all the duties in motion, to the gratification of the crowd without the barrack gates.

When they have passed through these gates, the different guards pursue the nearest way to their destinations, and at once come under the command of their respective officers. The commandant of the 'Tylt' gives the word to 'slope' arms, and thus notifies his presence; for the men, looking 'straight to their front,' have scarcely as yet seen him. A little farther on, arms are 'changed,' the rigid adherence to one attitude becoming irksome if the distance to be traversed is considerable. When at length within sight of the well-known archway of the Horse Guards, arms are changed again; and the sentry of the 'old' guard is seen hastening to the guardroom door to get his party 'turned out.'

After the usual formalities of salutation on the parts of the 'old' and 'new' guards have been gone through, the officer of the former hands over the keys to his relieving comrade; while the ser-

geants enter the guardroom and earnestly consider the 'deficiencies'—so many buttons are wanting on certain watchcoats, an 'Order Board' in one of the sentry-boxes is slightly defaced, or a dinner-plate has been broken in the 'cookhouse.' Meantime, the men of the new guard are indulging, though in suppressed tones, in a little banter with the party about to 'dismount;' or, more probably, they appear to be in deep thought as they stand 'at ease.' They are speculating as to how the sergeant will 'number them off.' This is to them a matter of solicitude, as some numbers will ensure their bearers a fair amount of sleep during the ensuing night, others will deprive the men of any fairly lengthened period of repose. After a brief interval, the sergeants come forth from the guardroom and join their respective parties. The numbering is accomplished; the 'first relief' being marched off to supplant the sentries belonging to the old guard. About this time, also, two soldiers appear on the farther margin of the Horse Guards Parade, carrying 'shoulder-high' a large iron-bound chest, painted blue, and bearing on its sides in white characters the name of a battalion of the Foot Guards. These men are the cooks, and the peculiar-looking chest contains provisions. Beside them marches a corporal, having under either arm a bearskin-cap case, evidently filled to its utmost capacity with some matter. On inspection, the well-packed matter would be found to consist of tea, sugar, or bars of salt.

Before long, the old guard in its entirety is marshalled under its officer, and straightway marches 'home;' while the party we are chiefly concerned with enters the guardroom. This is one of the older London guardrooms—it is probably in precisely the same condition as when the Great Duke was a familiar figure within the precincts of the Horse Guards. One peculiarity of the older apartments of this kind is, that the sergeant is provided with a table and seat on a raised platform or dais, where he does his writing and discusses his dinner, which latter he thus partakes of in a species of regal state. In the case of the Tylt, his isolation is somewhat augmented, owing to the fact that there is no proper access to the dais—it is only reached by walking over a portion of the guard-bed, often encumbered by the figures of recumbent soldiers. The other features of the guardroom are very much of the conventional sort: pegs whereupon to suspend the knapsacks, a rifle 'rack' with numbered spaces, and of course the printed 'Orders' for the guard. Here, too, is hung up in a conspicuous position a case containing a selection of photographs of the cabinet pattern. They comprise the members of the royal family, and a civilian might wonder why they are placed in a guardroom. The reason simply is, that the younger soldiers may recognise the persons represented, so as to salute them if they should pass their 'posts.' Not far distant from the apartment we have been dealing with is the officer's guardroom. But, unlike his subordinates, the commandant is not compelled to pass all his time with his guard: he may proceed to the clubs in Pall Mall, or call for his brother-officers 'on Queen's.' In the evening he is a member of the well-known mess dinner at St James's Palace; but has to return to the Tylt in time to go 'rounds' at eleven o'clock. Thereafter, the officer

may retire to bed in orthodox fashion; he is not forbidden, like the men, to 'remove his belts' while 'on guard.' Though the guard is always required to 'turn out' to the Bank Picket on its homeward march in the early morning, the officer is not disturbed until the arrival of his servant with a portmanteau from barracks, and is invisible to his 'command' till the time for 'dismounting.'

While waiting for their turn of 'sentry-go' in the large guardroom, the men employ themselves in various ways. Some read, and all thoroughly reblacken their boots, which have lost their lustre on the march from barracks. If the weather becomes wet and greatcoats are ordered to be put on, careful guardsmen divest themselves of their tunics and replace them by old and discoloured ones, which they extract from their knapsacks. But they have to do this quickly. As already hinted, there is a very stringent paragraph on the 'Order Board' to the effect that 'no man is to remove his belts while on guard;' and any delay will inevitably be observed by the vigilant sergeant from his elevated seat.

Soon after 'mounting,' a fanfare of trumpets causes a flutter in the guardroom, most of the men quickly seizing their rifles and moving towards the entrance, where they are met by a vociferous cry of 'Guard, turn out!' by the sentinel. When formed up outside, the soldiers see the cavalry guard approaching. This is 'found' by the household cavalry, and takes up its quarters in another wing of the Horse Guards, where stabling and other requisites for horsemen are provided. The well-known 'statuesque' mounted sentries posted in Whitehall belong to this guard, whose duty, of course, is quite distinct from that of the Tylt.

By the Tylt, five sentries are furnished in and near the Horse Guards; and it cannot be said that their functions materially differ from those of other metropolitan sentinels. One of them is posted at the guardroom door. An important part of his duty is to 'turn out' the guard to the mounted party above alluded to, as well as to the picket on its way to and from the Bank of England. Another sentry is placed in the Tylt-yard; and a third in Whitehall. The latter has a pretty long patrol. He is occasionally annoyed, on turning about, to see urchins perusing the instructions in his box; but by assuming a threatening cast of countenance he easily scares away such curious persons. The two remaining men are stationed in front of public offices. Their posts are quiet and retired; they have, however, to keep a 'sharp lookout' for the notabilities who enter these buildings, and who in certain cases require to be saluted. In addition to performing sentry-duty, the private soldiers have, two at a time, to escort the sergeant when he goes 'on patrols;' and two of them—who are exempted from patrols—accompany the officer in his 'rounds.' About a quarter to eleven, the drummer may be seen to adjust his bearskin, making his way towards the cookhouse. Here he lights the gas and opens the blue, iron-bound chest, in the bottom of which he finds a candle. Returning to the guardroom, he cuts the candle in two, placing one moiety in a lantern, and the other in the fire, which he thereby improves with an eye to the coffee or cocoa which will shortly be prepared. The hoarse challenge

of the sentry outside is now heard, and the reply, 'Friend,' is uttered by the officer, who has returned from the 'Queen's.' Then the sergeant demands the men 'for rounds;' and he himself, a corporal, the two soldiers already noticed, together with the drummer and lantern, proceed to the various 'posts' with the officer. And when the rounds get back to the guardroom, the principal event of the night is over.

In the morning the men who are reposing on the guard-bed are disturbed by the drummer-boy attached to the Bank Picket. He has hastened a little in advance of the main body of the picket to the Brigade Office, where he has left the 'report.' Passing through the Tylt, he announces that the 'Bank' is approaching, and then waits on the Horse Guards Parade till his party arrives. Thus forewarned, the guard is turned out in good time, and 'presents' arms to the picket, whose members look somewhat fatigued by their considerable march from the City. Just as the guard is being 'turned in,' the corporal of the cooks with his two men are seen advancing across the parade. They each carry a bearskin-cap case, containing, not a bearskin, but several small loaves of bread. And about half an hour later comes the officer's servant with a portmanteau. This functionary, after a short interval of gossip in the guardroom, begins to make preparations for his master to 'go off.'

While the members of the guard are making ready to dismount, or 'go off,' great activity prevails. The floor of the guardroom is well scrubbed, these daily scrubblings giving it a furrowed appearance, so that the boards almost look like a tract of hilly country as represented in the models used for the 'war-game.' And when they have completed their preparations, the men anxiously await the stentorian call of 'Guard, turn out!' which will inform them that their vigil is at an end.

HOSPITAL-WORK ON FRESH LINES.

HOSPITALS, their claims, their difficulties, and their drawbacks, have been brought from time to time before the notice of our readers, and we now propose giving some account of a new departure both as regards aims and management.

Those acquainted with the wards of an ordinary hospital know only too well how often a case lingers on, in unsatisfactory lack of progress. It has been an accident, perhaps, and the patient has recovered up to a certain point; but now no advance is being made; and when all remedies have been tried in vain, the unfortunate sufferer has to make way for more hopeful cases.

'Can nothing more be done for Mary Blake?' we inquired of a surgical friend, who had reluctantly given the child's parents notice that she must be removed.

'Nothing, under present conditions. If we could operate again it might mean a cure, but the general health is too bad. The fact is she wants months of country-life and fresh air to give her the chance of pulling round after an operation.'

'This she cannot have at home, of course; but could she not be got into a Convalescent Home?'

'No Home I know of would take such a case.

She needs regular surgical nursing, and this is not provided at Convalescent Homes.

And poor little Mary, languishing on her bed of pain in her one-room home until death came with happy release, is but a sample of thousands who, in all our crowded cities, are hopeless of cure, for lack of Nature's healing gifts, denied to her town-bred children.

With a view to meeting such cases, an experiment in hospitals has been set on foot for the benefit of London children; and it was our recent privilege to visit the charming little hospital known by the modest name of Heathbourne Cottage. 'Only eleven miles from Hyde Park Corner,' we are told; and we quite agree that 'it might be a hundred.' Indeed, so rural is the place, that having come without instructions, our Jehu finds it a question of patience to fall in with a passer-by; but as we draw up at a long low house, standing back from the road, all doubt is set at rest by an eager little white face, which has evidently caught sight of the stranger, and is conveying the news to companions in the distance.

A kindly greeting awaits us from the presiding genius, a lady who has undertaken the work as a labour of love, and who, with a 'chum' friend, sees practically to the welfare of her flock. We sit down for a few minutes in 'Sister's' pretty parlour, and enjoy a chat which shows how truly work may be its own reward, and as we sit, the low French-windows reveal a little group busily at work weeding.

'Why, they might almost be working for a living,' we remark.

'Oh, they are doing more than that,' says Sister with a smile; 'they are working for a slice of cake! Master Johnnie, who is the eldest of my convalescents, has got into the habit of being lazy, and I am trying to work him into brighter ways, now he is so nearly well.'

'Well, indeed!' we exclaim, as Johnnie hurries past, with an indescribable 'hop, skip, and jump.'

'Why, his walk is simply shocking.'

'It's not elegant,' admits Sister, amused; 'but he is able to do without a splint now; and if he goes to St Thomas's when he leaves, they may be able to do something for his stiff knee.'

'Is it the result of an accident?'

'Oh yes. He is a healthy enough child naturally; but in crawling about, he got a needle into his knee, and that has meant years of abscesses, operations, and stiffness.—Well, Mary, what do you want?' as an excited face peers in at the window.

'Oh, please, Sister, do come and look at this queer thing,' says Mary, a poor stunted specimen, nearly as broad as she is long; and standing on such spindle-legs, one wonders how they support her thick-set frame.

The 'queer thing' turns out to be a frog; and Cockney Mary receives a needed lesson in natural history, including the fact that frogs do not enjoy a hail of stones! Much illness has this poor little maid known in her twelve years of life; but the tiresome abscesses do not pain her now, and she is thoroughly enjoying her taste of the country.

And now we turn our attention to the children's ward, such a capital room, that it is difficult to believe it was not built for its present purpose. Extending the whole depth of the house, with a window at each end, even the bed-ridden children

can enjoy the gardens, back and front, whilst some are carried, bed and all, to revel on the lawn. The ward is made bright by other things than its windows: the eleven little beds, with their spotless counterpanes, look tempting enough to woo sleep to any eyes; whilst the many-pictured walls suggest endless fields of speculation for childish imaginings. A well-polished floor adds to the general cheeriness; and a nice harmonium, the gift of a friend, is both ornamental and useful, the children, as usual, taking great pleasure in singing.

The day is so lovely that only two or three are indoors. Wee Florrie, by the window, lies all day and every day on her face, her head to the foot of the bed; and in spite of pain and weariness, it is a very bright little 'skeleton' who tells of a wonderful doll that has been promised for her 'very own.' By the hour she will amuse herself with a doll, petting and loving it with a tenderness that is pathetic. A scrap-book, too, is a delight to Florrie; and she greatly enjoys some that have been made by stouter hands than her own, in a home where healthy, happy children are taught to give time and pains to the brightening of less favoured lives.

'Can you read, Florrie?' we ask.

'Oh no; I've been in 'orspittle too much.'

'Yes,' adds Sister; 'it is quite true. She and poor Jamie in the garden have never been well enough to go to school, and they have both suffered so much, no one has tried to teach them anything.'

Florrie, we learn, has recently undergone an operation, a distinction which roused the envy of the ward. 'Tarnt me have toroform too?' pleaded a mite of four.

'Oh! I don't like chloroform,' remarked an older hospital habituë; 'ether suits me best.'

'Indeed,' says Sister, 'their comparing of experience would be too comic from such baby-lips, if it were not for the under-tone of sadness.—But,' she adds, 'I must say they do not seem to see the sadness themselves; they are just happy in the present, or take comfort in thinking they will soon be better.'

A bronchial couple on either side the fireplace need screens even on this warm day; and the way those mites of four go through their troublesome fits of coughing and submit to all treatment, might well teach a lesson to most grown-up patients. In addition to bronchial troubles, one little maid is an abscess victim, and the other has lost a leg. The poor 'Museum,' as she is playfully called, was, when received, a choice specimen of the spoilt-child genus, and quite expected obedience to all her commands. Finding she could not get her own way in everything, she commenced a series of cries for 'Mother,' which were kept up by the hour, till her weak point was discovered to be the possession of a beloved 'ampage' (handkerchief), the withholding of which was punishment enough to ensure silence. The precious ampage had to be folded small enough to be within the grasp of Gertie's hand, where it remained day and night, to the exclusion of such commonplaces as dolls or toys! Indeed, the loss of her treasure was quite enough, in Gertie's estimation, to warrant her waking the nurse in charge, with the command, 'Find my ampage!' But a few weeks of gentle control have made

another creature of Gertie, who now attaches a different meaning to the word 'obey;' and in spite of her terribly bandaged head and neck, she is a pleasant little soul to look at. Her vis-à-vis, who would have been a fine child but for her misfortunes, has but one fear, which expresses itself at sight of the doctor, in a monotonous wail of, 'Don't want t' lose me other leg.'

'Is there any fear of it?' we ask Sister.

'Oh no; but she is afraid, because the leg that has been operated on does not heal, and has to be looked at when the doctor comes. She is rather a "special" case: a good operation going on well for a time, and then a cessation of healing power. She has been sent from a London hospital, and we all think the fresh air will give a new start towards healing.'

'But she cannot get into the fresh air?'

'Oh yes; she can. She gets about very well on crutches. It is only their coughs that keep both children in to-day. Our chief aim is to give them all as much open air as possible.' Then leading the way into the garden, she adds: 'Here you have all the rest of my flock.'

A merry little party it is too, full of eager talk, and unconsciously enjoying the bracing air which comes across the heath in refreshing draughts. A capital lawn makes a safe playground; and at sight of us, Baby Dot demands to be taken out of her perambulator for a 'want' on the soft grass. Such a sweet little thing is Dot! One of those children who win their way to all hearts by a certain nameless grace, which, added to a pretty face and bonnie eyes, make Dot quite irresistible. And yet, alas! she is the victim of a brutal father's drunken fury. Kicked out of bed and cruelly injured, the poor mite was taken off to the nearest hospital, where she was under treatment for many months. The father, after undergoing a term of imprisonment, paid Dot a visit in hospital; but even her baby-mind had grasped facts sufficiently to greet him with loud cries of alarm. He is in prison again, Sister has heard, for wife-beating; but it is very much a case of 'six of one, half-a-dozen of the other.'

Poor Dot is getting better from the hip-injury which left wounds that did not heal in London air; but as the baby-fingers clasp ours, and the sweet voice lisps an offer to 'Det 'oo a butting-hole,' it is impossible to help a shudder at the thought of what lies before the offspring of such parentage. But all unconscious of her future, comes the eager cry, 'Ere 'oo is,' and a daisy of Dot's own picking is confided to our keeping. 'Butting-holes,' Dot's generic name for flowers, tells of her mother's calling; but she is not the only little Londoner who revels in country spoils. Poor wee Jamie, one of the very worst cases, is enjoying a bunch of freshly gathered forget-me-nots, which grow luxuriantly round the garden; and he is for the time at least absorbed to forgetfulness of the many ailments which make him, at eight years old, a physical wreck.

'No hope for him, I fear,' says Sister; 'but he is so dear and good, he shall have every chance.'

'But with such wounds, how can he bear to be dressed?'

'Oh, he cannot; he is only wrapped up loosely, and that gray dressing-gown a friend sent, just covers him up nicely.'

'I suppose you get a good many things sent you?'

'Well—with a laugh—'not quite so many as we should like. Those pretty wool-hoods the girls have on came from a lady who promises cooler ones next week; and the red flannel jackets for wearing in bed were made at a children's working-meeting. But we could certainly do with more, especially in the way of pinafores and boots. —You see what Gracie is like in the boot-line,' as a child of ten crosses the lawn, in a pair of carpet slippers that must have been large for her mother.

'But surely no one could expect her to walk out in such things?'

'Well, the fact is she could not walk when she came; and her parents are so poor, that the purchase of a pair of boots is not a thing to be accomplished in a hurry; so, for the present she and Alice have to take turns with my only reserve of shoe-leather.'

Alice, whose turn it is to wear the reserve boots, now comes up and asks if she may help to get the little ones ready for a walk. She is the eldest of the party, and though very small of her age, has quite the town-child's precocity, and promptly packs Dot and the 'next youngest' into the perambulator with an experienced air that is very edifying.

Master Johnnie looks on with rather a doleful air, not sharing the general delight in a walk; but he gains something of importance by feeling himself the only male protector of the family!

As the perambulator is led off, Sister remarks: 'That was a useful present, and I am longing for a second; so few of the children can walk any distance without a lift now and then; and nice as our garden is, I do not like to keep them always in it.'

Very nice the garden undoubtedly is. Beyond the lawn, with its borders of flower and shrub, lies a good kitchen-garden, capable of supplying a large share of the household's vegetables; and at the bottom is a gate, opening on to the Heath itself, where one could wander for hours in undisturbed communion with nature.

Looking at the house from the garden, we remark on its suitability for present uses.

'Yes,' replies Sister; 'it is just the thing; the only drawback is no bathroom; but perhaps some day we may be able to build one leading out of the down-stairs ward; you see it would just fit in there'—pointing to a spot which might have been reserved for the purpose.

On the other side of the house is good stabling, with capital rooms above, one of which is secluded enough to offer perfect quiet for a night-nurse, whose rest must perforce be taken during the bustle of day-life. The stable is at present used as a laundry, and the whiteness of the piles of linen would make many a housewife envious.

'Do you keep a laundry-maid for this department?' we inquire.

'Oh yes; but it does not take her whole time, and I should like to get one good family's washing. That is'—with a smile—'until we are happy enough to be able to use the stable for the pony-chaise which is one of my ambitions.'

'I suppose it would be a great help with the children?'

'It would indeed, especially in getting to and

from the station. It is a good three miles off, which makes it awkward sometimes, although there is an omnibus twice a day, and the cabmen are merciful in their charges to us.'

'Does the distance prevent parents' visits?'

'Oh no; they manage it, one way or another, unless, like poor Dot's parents, they do not care enough to take any trouble.'

This little talk has been carried on during our progress through the lower part of the house, including a bright kitchen with a convenient window, communicating with Sister's sitting-room. And now we mount the one flight of stairs which lands us on the top story. Above the large downstairs ward are two rooms, both in only partial use. The larger, overlooking the garden, has been brought into requisition a few times for adult patients, but, as Sister longingly remarks: 'It would make a beautiful ward for eight children!'

'And would that be as many as you care to take?'

'Quite. A larger number would alter the character of the place; we want to keep up the home-feeling, and to know each child personally.'

'Do you take children only?'

'I do not say that; we certainly prefer them; but at anyrate whilst this room is not otherwise engaged, we do not refuse adults really needing fresh air and nursing.'

'Of course, more patients would mean more nurses.'

'Most certainly; and even now we should like a second lady-pupil. A young girl, fond of children, could be very happy here, I am sure; and with such cases as ours, there is a good deal to be learnt. For instance'—opening the adjoining door—'you see, my co-worker, who is also a trained nurse, is taking charge of a very bad case. Annie has had bronchitis, pleurisy, and pneumonia, and was for days in a tent-bed, with a steam-kettle constantly going, and jacket-poultices to be kept hot; and even yet she needs watching day and night.' The little patient looks white and thin enough still; but there is a tone of triumph in her kind nurse's voice as she says: 'We shall pull her through.'

'Do you keep this room for special cases?'

'Oh no; it is really a nurses' sitting-room, or at least it will be, when I get a full staff and a sofa or armchair. Then we have a small room for a lady-visitor, invalid or not'—leading the way to a cosy nest, which, in spite of a sloping ceiling, boasts such a lovely view over miles of heath, tree, and water, that we feel sure it would never be empty were its existence better known.

'I should not mind a few more comforts for this room,' says Sister; but adds with a laugh: 'You will think there is no end to my wants.'

'Well, you have not put the usual first, at anyrate. I suppose you "want" contributions?'

'They would certainly not be refused! And unless I get outside help, I shall never be able to complete my number.'

'I think your patients pay, or are paid for?'

'Invariably. I have had too much experience not to make this a rule; but the payments only just cover the cost of maintenance.'

'I suppose fresh air freshens appetites?'

'"Freshen" is a mild way of putting it: the increase is simply incredible; and besides plenty of good nourishing food, our children consume an

alarming amount of their beloved cod-liver oil, which is not by any means a cheap dainty. Then, too, in such a case as Annie's, the expenses are heavy. Three pints of milk in the twenty-four hours, cream, new-laid eggs, and two ounces of brandy, besides champagne at the worst, makes a considerable hole in seven shillings a week!'

'And how do you meet the expenses other than maintenance?'

'I make myself responsible for everything; but I reckon on some portion of the expense being met by friends and helpers.'

And we venture to think the 'reckoning' will not be in vain. Our last impression lives still in the memory; and we wish our readers could share the sight of the happy group of children seated at tea in the bright ward, made brighter by the glow of a setting sun. Each little face is gravely intent on doing justice to the bracing Bushey air, an intentness fully shared by terrier Tip, the house-friend, who is on capital terms with the children, especially at meal-times.

And remembering the chance of renewed health that is thus being provided for the sickly children of Babylon, all will agree in wishing well to this new effort, which, if successful, will doubtless be copied in all directions, and be the means of greatly increasing the usefulness of existing hospital-work. Full information can be obtained on application to the Lady Superintendent, Miss Derham, Heathbourne Cottage, Bushey Heath, Herts.

THE ORIGINAL MAGNA CARTA.

In that amusing book, the *Curiosities of Literature*, D'Israeli describes how Sir Robert Cotton found his tailor holding in his hand an original Magna Carta, which he was about to cut up for measures; and the story, whether true or not, may make us thankful for the happy chances which have preserved some of our most valuable national documents. No doubt, many of the highest interest have been destroyed; but some, such as Domesday Book, still survive; and when we think of the perils from neglect and from active violent enmity, their survival is a matter for wonder and thankfulness. The Articles of the Great Charter of King John is another fortunate survivor; and one or two Great Charters themselves exist which have a fair claim to be called originals.

The Great Charter, it will be remembered, was agreed to by King John on the 15th of June 1215 at Runnymede. It was, in truth, not an Act of Parliament or statute, but a treaty between the king and his subjects, and was framed upon a series of forty-nine Articles drawn up by the barons and presented to the king. There were consequently two separate documents: one, 'The Articles of the Great Charter of Liberties;' and the other, 'The Great Charter' itself. Neither were signed by either the king or the barons. Both were sealed with the Great Seal of King John; and, as we shall see, there is some evidence that the Great Charter was sealed by some of the barons; but the barons do not appear to have sealed the Articles.

The original Articles are in the British Museum, and a fac-simile of them is exhibited to the public. They are written in Latin, on parchment ten inches and three-quarters broad,

and twenty-one inches and a half long including the fold for receiving the label. To the label, the Great Seal of King John is still appendant; but, unfortunately, the whole document has been greatly damaged.

Its history is very obscure. At an early date it was probably deposited at Lambeth, and it apparently remained there till 1645. At the end of the seventeenth century it was in the possession of Gilbert Burnet, Bishop of Salisbury, and he gives, in the *History of his Own Time*, the following account of the manner in which he came by it. When the impeachment of Archbishop Laud was brought to the bar of the Lords, 'he, apprehending how it would end, sent over Warner, Bishop of Rochester, with the keys of his closet and cabinet, that he might destroy or put out of the way all papers that might either hurt himself or anybody else. He was at that work for three hours, till, upon Laud's being committed to the Black Rod, a messenger went over to seal up his closet, who came after all was removed. Among the writings he took away, it is believed the original Magna Carta passed by King John in the mead near Staines was one. This was found among Warner's papers by his executor; and that descended to his son and executor, Colonel Lee, who gave it to me. So it is now in my hands; and it came very fairly to me.' For this conveyance of it we have nothing but conjecture. As Burnet had been allowed to search all the public records, Lord Dartmouth suggests that the above account was intended to allay any suspicion that he had obtained so valuable a document in a less justifiable manner.

From Burnet the Articles descended to his son, Sir Thomas Burnet; then to his son's executor, named Mitchell; from whose daughter it was bought by Earl Stanhope, and presented to the British Museum in 1769.

When the Articles had been agreed upon, they were reduced to the form of a charter, and this is the true Magna Carta of King John. It is said that a very large number of originals were made, and one was deposited in each diocese, some say in each county, but this is scarcely probable. One of these originals is still preserved in the very curious and interesting old library at Lincoln Cathedral. It is said to have been discovered among the documents there, in 1763, by Dr Richardson; and the word 'Lincolnia' endorsed in a contemporary hand on two folds gives reason to believe that it was the charter transferred by the hands of Hugh, the then Bishop of Lincoln, who is one of the bishops named in the introductory clause. In the British Museum are two more originals, both belonging to the Cottonian manuscripts; but they are not considered of such high authority as that at Lincoln.

One of the Cottonian charters has a small part of the Great Seal of King John still attached; but the whole is much injured; the other is in better preservation, and, though it has no seals, it has three slits in the parchment, apparently for labels to which seals have been attached, that in the centre being the largest. It is therefore possible that seals of barons were formerly attached to it, and it is probably the document referred to in Smith's catalogue of the Cottonian

manuscripts, dated Oxford 1695, as having the seals of some of the barons appendant. It may also be that described by Isaac D'Israeli in his *Curiosities of Literature* as having been rescued by Sir Robert Cotton from his tailor, who was about to cut it up for measures.

Such is all that we have succeeded in discovering about originals of the Great Charter of King John. The fact that there are two documents of the same date has given rise to much confusion and to many misstatements, even by authors who might have been expected to have known better; but this is not the only source of error, for there were several reissues of the Great Charter, originals of which are apt to be confused with the Magna Carta of King John. The first of these reissues was by Henry III. in 1216. An original of this *Magna Carta Regis Henrici III.* exists in Durham Cathedral. It itself states that it was sealed by Gualo the legate and William, Earl of Pembroke. The seals are lost, but the labels to which they were affixed remain. The second reissue was in 1217, and the original is in the Bodleian Library at Oxford. It still bears the seals of Gualo the legate and William, Earl of Pembroke. The third reissue was in the ninth year of Henry III. (1224-25). There is an original at Durham Cathedral, which has unfortunately been injured by the accident of having some ink thrown over it; and there is another original at Lacock Abbey, in Wiltshire, the seat of Charles Talbot, Esq. Both have the Great Seal of Henry III. still attached.

Among the Cottonian manuscripts in the British Museum there is an original confirmation of Magna Carta, dated 36 Henry III. (1251-52). It is bound up in a volume of charters. In 1297 Edward I. sealed at Ghent a confirmation of Charters; and Magna Carta is consequently described in modern editions of the statutes as either of the ninth year of Henry III. or of the twenty-fifth year of Edward I. The history of these original charters is a good illustration of the haphazard way in which some of our most valuable public documents have been preserved, and makes it easy to understand that many others have disappeared or only exist in a fragmentary condition.

TWILIGHT.

THROUGH the black arch of interlacing trees
Burns the red sunset, and a blue mist lies
Cold on the darkening meadows, whence arise
Faint dewy odours as the evening breeze
Sweeps o'er the sombre grasses of the leas,
And in the gloom of leafy branches dies;
Waking to being as the daylight flies
An adumbration of dim memories.
Ah! the enchanted realms that used to be
In the wide reaches of our childhood's sky,
Vague, lonely, far, immeasurably high,
In the mysterious fields of Infancy,
Beyond whose ultimate verge we could descry
The brooding shadow of Infinity!

MARY GEOGHEGAN.

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